

To the right Excellent and most vertuous Lady Anne, Duchesse of Somerset, her graces moste humble Orator Iohn olde wish|eth true felicitie and continuaunce of health in Christ Iesuoure only saueour.

COnsyderyng (moste vertuous and excellēt Ladye) that the holy goste playnlie commendynge by the mouthes of the moste worthy kinges of famous memorie Dauid and Salomon, the myghtye effectuous wor|king vertue, and necessary holsomnes, of the feare of God, which is the right foundation and groundworke of godlly wysedome, sayeth amonge other specyall•yes of sondry mencioned states of persones, in a vehement admi•acy on of praise: that the woman whiche feareth the Lorde, shalbe so muche commen|dacion worthie, and be esteemed for so excellent a treasour and lewell, that her price is farre beyonde the vttermoste coastes: because that hauynge that sure grounde worke of wisdom, she like a dyligent skilfull house wife, employeth the stocke and whole substaunce of her qualities and trauaile in those necessitie▪ dooinges from tyme to tyme, which make to the furniture of true religion and the glory of God, suppressing of vice, aduauncement of christian vertue, and to the reliefe of the nedy, especially those of the householde of faith: so that in her labours and ordrely forcaste of well dooinges, procedinge from vertue to vertue, as thoccasion and necessitie of matter perswadeth, the pillars and tur|•ettes of heauenly wisdom shynynge and glistringe in the eyes of the behol|ders, declare her worthie praises and price to bee of moste notable estymacyon and value before God and man: And forasmuch as the experience of your graces godly frutes of vertuous life and dooinges, hathe and dooeth vndenyab|lye reporte the vnfayned feare and loue of God to be in your harte, aswell in your graces moste christian studies and trauailes in the faithfull furtheraunce and aduauncement of the syncere worde of God, as in liberall reliuing, helping and with moste hartie diligence succouring the poore, as the commune patronesse and helper of all nedy & succourles settours forth of the Gospell of Christ: where in the later ende of thys laste yeare I toke in hande at the request▪ of your graces humble seruaunt▪ my speciall good frende Edward whitchurch Printour, to translate the Paraphrases of Erasmus vpon certain of Paules epistles, whiche were lefte vntranslated for lacke of payne takers in that mat|ter, for somuche as the learned menne appoynted to thys purpose of translaci|on, had finished their limited taskes before: and now at the like request I haue made the like enterpryse to translate the Canonycall Epistles of. S. Peter, Iude, Iames and Iohn: Being encouraged by youre graces muche proued clemencie towardes all menne in generall, I am presentlie bolde to dedicate these symple doinges of my rude traulacion vnto your moste noble and excell|lent

name, not as a thing (being of it selfe a translacion of basse kinde of thenglishe phrase, accordinge to the rude commune Englishe speache of the countrey where I was borne) worthie youre graces commendacion, but as a moniment and reknowlaginge of my moste bounden duetie of humble thanks geuinge vnto your grace, for causinge me to bee called of late to a competent vicatage called Cob●gton in warwike shire, at the humble sute of the reuerende ministre of Goddes worde, my singular frende Doctour hugh Latymer: and as a con|staunt memoriall and token of my duetie to conside, vpon what respecte he be|stowed his sure, & your grace youre gracious helping forewardenes towards me: that I shoulde dispen|ce and employe my contynuall studie, labours, resi|dence, trauailes and industries to the earnest performacion and faithfull dis|charge of that ecclesiastical charge, vocacion and office committed vnto me, and to content my selfe as indifferentlye with that competent small lyuinge, as though it were of muche more reuenues and value: Besechyng your grace to take this my moste humble present in good and benign● parte, consideryng that for wante of ryches of eloquence and learnyng to caste in to the commune treasury amonge the abundaunt ryche dooinges of famous learned men, I am readily glad, as an obscure vnlearned person, with the poore widow to cast in my two mytes.

Now touchyng thys notable learned Paraphrast D. Erasmus, if hys do|linges vpon the Gospelles and Actes of thapostles be so necessarye and holsom playne declaracions of Christes minde and the Euangelistes, as the opinion of many learned, is they bee: his Paraphrases also vpon the pistles, are no lesse frutefull ne lesse profytable to geue lyght and ready instruccion vnto mennes consciences, aswell to plucke away er●onyous opynyons, if he be redde with aduised iudgement, and to teache Christ aright, as to banysh pride, dronkenes, ●reason, tumultes, sedicion, vproares, incontinen|cie, ryot, idlenes, ruffianyng vagabuncie, malyce, slaunder, vncommely talking, lyght tales ●nuentyng and caryng, deuouring of neighbours, and couetousnes, the rote of al wickednesse: whiche horrible vices are now a dayes so licentious|ly vsed and practiced on all hādes for the most parte, hat Gospel like truth & liberty is almost vtterly chaū|ged in to hellishe iniquitie: suche is the deuilles diligent preaching pre|lacie, not only endeuouryng to bring to passe therby to plante and establish his Romysh Antichristianitie with disobedience and other his braunches and states of wic|kednes agayne, partly vnder pretence of a Christen libertie, and partly vnder colour of a commune wealth, but also to cause the Gospel of Christ the rebuke● of disobedience and all other kyndes of vice, to beare the blame of false opin|ions, disobedience, and naughtie lyuing, as though it were thoccasyon or bollsterour of vice.

To the redresse hereof, Erasmus in these epistles is a ready strong interpre|tour in many necessary places: in all I am not hable to affirme, knowing that he in hys life tyme, was a manne subiecte to infirmitie and imperfeccion accor|ding to the naturall condycion of manne: as he himselfe speaketh of the great Doctour. S. Hierome: *Homo●rat, et falli po●rat et fallere.* A manne he was, and might bothe be deceaued and deceaue.

And as for my labour in this rude Englishe translacion, I toke it in hande for none other ende, but only to doe at my hartie frendes vndenyable request, a litell parte, whiche learned menne hauyng done certayne seuerall partes of the

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other paraphrases, had by occasyon lette vntranslated: and that the vnlearned might through diligent reading of these englished paraphrases, tast, according to the measure of theyr faith, the swetenes of Christe, and the vertue of true obedyence and christen liuyng, and auoide the deuilles subtill lugging, eschewe disobedience and sedicious assembling, repent of light ruffia•yng and blasphemous carnal Gospelling, contemne the world with al his painted flatering, and abhorre the to muche wickedly vsed brutish lyuing. The Lorde Iesus Christe the onely autor of saluacyon and healthe, contynue and encrease hys moste gracyous gyftes in youre grace to the ende, and loyfully preserue youre long prosperous healthe in hym.

Amen.

The xv. of Iulie. M. D. xlix.

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¶ The Canonick Epistles.

- ¶ The .i. Epistle of saynct Peter.
- The .ii. Epistle of. S. Peter.
- The Epistle of. S. Iude.
- The Epistle of. S. Iames.
- The .i. Epistle of. S. Iohn.
- The .ii. Epistle of. S. Iohn.
- The .iii. Epistle of. S. Iohn.

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The Argumente of D. Erasmus of Roterodame vpon the firste Epistle of S. Peter.

Peter writeth to the Iewes that dwelt here and there in the coastes of the Gētiles (as Iames dyd) an Epistle (no doubt) worthie the chief of the Apostles, which is full of apostolike autoritie and maiestie, and is comprysed in fewe

woordes, but full of sentences. He exhorteth meune pacientlye to beare the euils, that they suffred for malice of the gospell, in hope of reward. Moreouer he admonisheth them, that accordyng to the Prophetes mencioned saynges, beyng freely called to so high dignitie, they expresse a life worthie of their profession. For he sayth, christianitie consisteth not in title or baptisme onely, but in innocencie of maners: for in that they are otherwyse afflicted with sorowes, it maketh nothyng to the glory of Christe: if they appeare manifestly to suffre for naughtie dedes dojng. Furthermore he admonisheth such as come in to christianitie, that they refuse not to obey magistrates, though they see heathens, leste beyng prouoked they can neyther be conuerted to Christ, but become more fearce and cruell. Also that seruauntes denye not their duetie to their maisters, though they be heathens. For the office of christian goodnes is, to suffre al thynges. Furthermore he admonisheth the christian women that they contemne not their husbandes though they be heathens, but study by their owne maners to prouoke them vnto better. He warneth the husbandes to beare with their wyues, and to absteyne somtymes from hauing to do with them, so as they may the more apply them selues to praier. Than he prouoketh men aliter the example of Christ, to suffre displeasures, and not to ymagine howe to requyte wronge with wronge, but to deuise howe to ouercome their euyll doers with softenes and well doynge. And these matters he treateth of in the thre first Chaptres and in the beginning of the fourth. After these he exhorteth men vnto newenesse of life and dissuadeth from the heathens vices. He allureth men vnto sobrenesse, vnto watching, to continual prayers, and aboue other vnto mutuall charytie vnto hospitalitie and to do good turnes one for an other. Agayne he enticeth men patiently to suffer persecucions, layed vpon them for Christes name sake. Than he informeth bishops, and in them the people vnder their charge. In the ende he reporteth that he wrote an other epistle vnto them by Siluanus, which was loste. This epistle it appeareth he wrote from Babilō, for in the name of that churhe he saluteth them, if any man allowe not the vnderstanding of Rome by Babylon.

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The paraphrase of D. Erasmus of Roterodame vpon the first Epistle of S. Peter.

Peter an Apostle of Iesu Christ, to them that dwell here and there as strangers thorow out Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithinia, electe accordyng to the foreknowledge of God the father thorowe the sanctifying of the spirite vnto obedience, and spilling of the blood of Iesus Christe. Grace be with you and peace be multiplyed.

Peter somtyme a disciple and a continuall guest, but nowe an Embassadour and Apostle of Iesu Christ, to all them that dwell here and therein the coastes of litell Asia, at Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, and in

that parte that is properly named Asia, whiche the Ephesians haue, and Bithi•a, whome either the stormy tempestes of warres haue in tymes paste scaltred abroade some to on place some to an other, or elles whome the rageing cruellie of them, which halsted the name of Christe, hathe giltelessy dryuen out of the places where their fathers dwelt before them: and ore by that meanes nowe comfortles amonge strange nacions, as it were danyshed men, belyng in dede for feare of men, thrust out of their natyue countrey, but yet not excluded ne banyshed, neither depryued frome the offyce of Ghospell preathing, which God the prince of al men bestowed chiefly vnto the lande and nacion of Iewes, after suche a sorte, that he woulde for al that haue it commune to all them, whome soeuer he hath chosen. For lyke as those are neuer the better for being borne and leading their life at Hierusalem, which fet naught by the doctrine of Iesus Christ: euen so shal it def•a•de no man, in that he dwelleth amonge the vncircumcised and prophane Gentiles, so that in stede of Moses lawe he embrace the grace of the ghospell. For it is not the obseruacion of the lawe, wh•t with the Iewes are commonly puffed vp, that bringeth true saluacion, neither kynredde or place, but the free eleccion of God. He is a ryght Iewe in dede, wihche what countrey soeue• he dwell in, or what kynred soeuer he is borne of, acknowledgeth Iesus Christe to be the a•tour of true saluacion, which dyed not for one nacion of people alone, but for the whole vniuersall worlde. But in y• we so acknowlege him, we are not endebted to the me•tte of obseruing the lawe, but vnto the free goodnesse of God, whiche choseth out of al maner of nacions, & callleth vnto the lyberal fredome of the gospell, whome soeuer it standeth with hys pleasure to •all vntoit. For it neither came of late sodaynly in to hys mynde, to saue al maner of mortal men by thys meane, ne yet enforced with our wel doinges, helayth this vp as a reward for vs, as though we had so merited, but this was de•reed of god the father by his eternal coūsail, that he would opē the porte of saluaciō, not to the Iewes only, but to al nacions vniuersally: not by circūcision, not by keeping y• custome of the sabboth, neiither by choise of meates, ne yet by other ceremonies of Moses lawe, which are corporal matters, & nothing but certain shadowes of spiritual thinges that were geuē for a time: but by true sanctificacion of the spirite, which the spiritual lawe of y• gospel geueth vnto vs, by y• which we are truly purged

in dede from all oure synnes, not for because we haue obserued the pre|scriptes of the olde law, but because we playnly & readily put our trust in the promisses of the ghospell: not by sprinkling of the bloud of a calfe, as it hath been hitherto wont to be done according to the custome of the law, but by the sprinkling of the precious bloud of the vndefiled and

most acceptable sacrifice to God, Iesus Christ: whose undeserued death
 wypeth cleane away from vs, all the transgressions of oure former
 conuersacion once for al, and after we be borne a new, as it were, into
 him through baptisme, it restoreth vs vnto a new life. And forasmuch as
 baptisme hath exempted vs from this world, & engrafted vs into the
 participacion of heauenly rewardes, I will not pray for those goodes (in
 getting and heaping together wherof the toylers of the world thinke
 themselves fortunate) but those goodes rather, which purge vs cleane from
 earthly contagious infections, and make vs worthy the prince of heauen
 Christ: that is to say, Grace, that in distrusting your owne merites, and in
 putting no confidence in the ceremonies of the lawe, you may looke for
 true saluacion of the fre bounteous liberalitie of God, and in purtyng
 unfayned trust in the gospel: And besides this I wishe Peace, that beyng
 frely reconciled to God by the blood of Christe, you may haue concorde
 both among your selves and with all other, not only hurting no body, but
 also pardonyng other mennes fanites, and requityng good turnes for
 euill: the chaunce of which goodes lyke as you haue frely receyued of
 God, euen so it standeth you in hand to apply your selves vnto godly
 studies, that you may waxe riche in the encreasing vsury of good workes
 more and more, not onely persisting stedfast in that you haue begonne,
 but also going forward dayly better and better, vntill the day come
 wherein the rewarde of immortalitye shalbe openly geuen, wherof you
 haue now conceiued a certaine assured hope out of the gospel of
 Christe, that we should thereby challenge no prayse vnto our selues.

The texte.

Blessed be God the father of our Lorde Iesus Christe, which according to his
 abundant mercy begatte vs agayne vnto a lyuely hope (by that that Iesus
 Christs rose agayne from death) to an inheritaunce immortall and
 vndefyled, and that perisheth not, reserved in heauen for you, whiche are
 kept by the power of God thorowe fayth, vnto saluacion, which is prepared
 already to be shewed in the last time, in the which ye reioyce, though now
 for a season (if nede requyre) ye are in tribulacions, thorow manyfold
 temptacions, that the tryall of your fayth being muche more precious then
 golde that perysheth (though it be tryed with fyre) might be founde vnto
 laude, glory and honour, at the appering of Iesus Christe, whom ye haue not
 seen, and yet loue hym: in whom euen now, though ye see him not, yet doe
 you beleue, and reioyce with say vnspeakable, and glorious receiuing the
 ende of your fayth, euen the saluacion of your soules.

For this so passing a great benefite, his liberalitie is to be praysed, of
 whom by Christ cometh vnto vs, whatsoever it be that maketh vs truly
 blessed. And that is not Moses, but God himselfe, & the same the father of
 our Lord Iesus Christ, which (whan we were lytle fortunately borne of
 Adam, that is to say borne to synne, borne to death) hath begotten vs
 new agayne into innocencie, and hath begotten vs vnto life that neuer

shall dye, being prouoked by no merites of ours, but stiered frely of his owne mer|cye wherein he most chiefly exceedeth: and this hath he done not by y[•] ayde of Moses lawe, but by the costeous gyft of his owne sōne Iesus Christ, whom he would haue to suffre death, to thintent, where we were els del|perate

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wretches, he might diliuer vs frō the tyranny of synne & death: And him he called anon frō death to lyfe, that we beyng in this worlde dead to worldly lustes, & hauing remembraunce as it were before our tyes of the resurrecciō, after his exāple in vprightnes of conuersacion, might haue an assured & a ready hope, that we also shal once be exempt out of these sorowes & atteine with Christ vnto y[•] euerlasting enheritaunce, whiche lyke as he beyng our head hath already atteyned, so shal al we also folowe as ma|ny as be engrafted to y[•] mēbres of Christ, & are made worthy by folowing of his crāple, to be called his brethren, & the chyldrē of y[•] selfe same father that he is: that like as we suffre commune afflictions with him, so should we haue reward also together w^t him. As long as we were the sonnes of the synful Adam, an infortunate enheritaūre abode vs. But as sone as we were made y[•] sonnes of God, we make spedy haste to y[•] enheritaūce of hea|uen. For it besemeth, y[•] seing we are borne from heauen, we should behold heauēly thinges, & seing we are borne of God, we should folo we nothing but godlines. They y[•] serue the world goe about to haue rewardes y[•] are transitory & wage that is slyppery: but for vs there remayneth y[•] happy[•] enheritaunce after these temperal afflicciōs, which can neither be corrup|ted with death, ne defited with wearines or heauines, ne yet fade a way by age or sluttishnes. There is no cause for vs to be afrayed of, leste any man should in the meane whyle take this so plenteous an heritage out of our handes. We haue an assured fayth full promyse maker: And in his hādes it is safely kept & layed, vp in stoare for vs in heauen: howbeit after suche sort, that for al that there must an assured hope, and as it were a certayne pledge remayne in the meane time with men vpō earth, not with al maner of men, but w^t you & such like as you are, buto whom the spirite of Christ is geuen in stede of a gage: & which, albeit ye are for y[•] time tossed on euery syde w^t condry stormes of sorowes, y[•] the frailtie of māis vtterly vnhable of himselfe to beare out, yet by the succour of God, which is mighty in al thinges, you are preserued, not through your owne merites, but by fayth & vnfained trust: wherby you dout not, but frō the last time, after y[•] which there shal be no more of this confusion of humayne matters, but the euill mē being appointed to their tormenteutes shalbe hable

to do no body harme, & the good being safe frō al inuasions of sorowes
shal haue the fruciō of euerlasting rest. For now y• rewardes lye hiddē, &
many times after the cō|mune peoples estimaciō, thei are in wurse
condiciō y• be of y• better, & those seme to perish which are most
specially in sanegarde, & thei seme to flourish which most chiefly goe to
naught. In this worlde there is time to exercise godlines, & the reward
hath his time prescribed vnto it, which it behoueth not to preuēt. In y•
meane seasō let it be ynough for vs, y• euerlasting felici|tie is kept in
safegarde for vs, which neither mannor deuil can be hable to take away
frō vs before hād, so y• we shrinke not from y• fayth, wherby we ought to
condēne mortal mens matters, & depende wholly of heauen. Let there be
in y• meane seasō fearce folkes, which being rebels to god, trust to the
aydes of y• world, let thē for y•time stampe & stare ouer you as though
you wer ouercomē & left succoutles. But whan y• day shal come, & the
dis|course of thiges turned vp side down, they shal be tormēted, & you
shal reioyce like cōquerours, yea you ought to reioyce euē now also
through y• vndoubted lokīg for of so passig a great felicitie. For it ought
not to seme

vnto you a greate or a greuouse matter, though by afflictions and griefes
that are but shorte and shall soone haue an ende, you come to the blisshed
that neuer shall decaye. And perchaunce these persecucions also shall
once haue an end, which notwithstanding as often as they come in vre are
to be borne with a myghtye stoute stomake, and without dismaying for
the glory of God, in hope of the lyfe to come. For after suche wyse doeth
the wysedom of God in prouiding for your commodities permitte, that the
sinceritie and stedfastnes of your faith may be tried through sondry
assaultes of sorowes. For yf golde (which elles were a thing both lost and
would goe to naught) be tryed out not only by the touche stone, but also
is assayed by the fire, to thintente it maye thenceforth bee had in so
muche the more price as it is the more exactly fyned: much more wil
God haue your faith, wherunto so high honour of duetie belongeth, to be
tried with sondry experimentes, to thin|tent that whan it shal glister out
of these flames of sorowes and afflictions, and being farre more pure and
more glittering than any golde though it be neuer so fyne, it may be
precious in the syght of God, and that all the matter at length may grow in
to cleane contrary condicion: that is to were that the thyng which semed
to be layed vpon you in this worlde vnto reproche, may chaunce vnto
prayse: and that which semed vnto vilany, may be turned vn|to glory: that
whiche semed to be layed vpon you to put you to dishonestie, may be
turned in to habūdaunce of honour in that day, whan Iesus Chrst, whose

power worketh nowe in you by secrete meanes, shal she we forth him selfe openly vnto all men, and rendre vnto euery man rewarde accordyng to hys desartes. For what is a more gloryous thyng, than to be praysed of Christes owne mouthe? whan you shall heare: *Come you blessed of my father*: what thyng is more honorable than to be receaued of God the father into the felowshippe of the kyngdome of heauen together with the sonne? But thys glory, although it shall be the comen glory of all godly folkes, yet it shall chaunce more haboundantly vnto them, that haue suffered greater thynges vpon earth for Christes sake. Whiche rewardes in case they were nome presently apparent, the strength of faythe should bee no maruclous matter. But nowe the special chiefe prayse of good folkes consisteth in this point, that where you neuer sawe Christ with your bodyly eies, yet with the eies of fayth you see him and loue him: and wher as the violence of sorowes doeth openly & presently grate vpon you, but the rewardes, which are kept till a daye, doe not nowe appeare, yet puttyng assured confidence in hys promisses, you suffre these thynges with none other stomacke, than yf the glory were presently furnyshed before your iyes, neither doe you suffre only with boldenesse, but also in the mydle of afflictions you reioyce with an vn|speakable ioy, beyng ful of glory before God, that is to say, of a well hoping conscience, and full of a certayne vnfeyned confidēce, that where you suffre suche thynges vnderuedly, you shall, by the will of God, haboundantly receyue a great fruyte of your fayth, that is to wete, the eternall saluacion of your soules. For it is a great vauntage, whan through the loosyng of the mortall body, the immortall soule is preserued. Thus it was decreed by the eternal counsayle of God, that menne should atteyne saluacion by these meanes, whereby euen Christe hymselfe came to euerlasting blessednesse.

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The texte.

Of which saluacion haue the Prophetes enquired and searched, which proheryed of the grace that should come vnto you, searchyng when or at what tyme the spyryte of Christe (which was in them) should signifie, which spyryte testified before, the passiōs that should happen vnto Christ, and the glory that should folow aftet: vnto which Prophetes it was also declared, that not vnto them selues, but vnto vs, they shoulde minister the thynges which are nowe shewed vnto you of them, which (by the holy ghoste sent doune from heauen) haue in the gospel preached vnto you the thinges, which the Angels desyre to behold.

For these matters are not by chaunce brought to passe at all auentures, but the selfe same thyng that we haue alreadye sene, the olde Prophetes (which prophecied before hand that you should be saued through faith

and the grace of the gospell without the ayde of Moses lawe) haue diligently sought and searched out, not beyng contented to see as it were through a myste what shoulde be to come: but they haue also with a godly curiositie searched out of the spirite of Christ, which than presently signified vnto the by secret inspiracion, what Christe should suffre, and vnto what excellent glory he shoulde by any be aduanced vnto, than what or what maner of tyme that shoulde come to passe: forsomuche as theyr myndes were vehemently desirous of his sauynge helth. And vnto them it was also manifested, that these thynges, which they prophesied beforehand should come to passe, should not be exhibited in their tymes, but in yours: and the thynges that they opened in their prophecies, they opened vnto you & not to them felues. In dede they would haue wisshed to see, that you haue chaunced to see: but theyr prophecies were spoken before to thintent that we Apostles should be more certaynly credited, which declare nowe vnto you the thynges already done, that they had spoken beforehand should come to passe. And that you shoulde also not stande in doubt, the same spirite of Christe in tymes past taught them with secret still inspiracions, what he had determined to doe, which lately cūmyng doune from heauen in fyrietongues instructed vs, to thintent we should be preachers in al the whole worlde of the thynges that are come to passe. For we preache Christ that became man foral our saluaciō sake, was conuersant on earth, was afflicted with reproches & torments, finally was nayed on the crosse, suffered death for oure sakes, and anon ratysed agayne to lyfe, was exalted vnto heauen, where now he glistreth in maiestie and glory with the father (which before semed vpon earth to be but a vile rascall and an abiecte) and thither also will he exalte those that his be. These matters inasmuch as they were done by the vnspeakable counsaill of God, it is no maruell though the prophetes desired to see them, seyng it is so excellently pleasant and acceptable a sight euen to the angels them selues to loke vpon, w^t the beholding wher of they cannot be fulfilled. The greater the benefite is which is offred vnto you, the more gredyly you ought to embrace it, that it be not through your owne fault that you attayne it not. The rewarde is certayn, but it shalbe your dueties for all that, to behaue your selues so, that you seme not vnworthy the promises. The day that is lokyd for, wil come, which shal openly bryng forth the rewardes both of the godly and of the vngodly. It wyll come once, whansoeuer it shalbe, and it shal come pleasant and happy to suche as it shall fynde readyly prepared: on the contrary parte, it shall come fearfully to them that it shall fynde vnfaithfull

sluggardes and carelesly mynded.

The texte.

Wherefore gyrd vp the loynes of your myndes, be sobet, & trust pefectly on the grace that is brought vnto you (by the declaryng of Iesus Christ) as obedient chylrdcu, that ye geue not your selues ouer vnto your olde lustes; by whiche ye were led whau as yet ye were ignoraunte of Christe: but as he which called you is holy, euen so be yeholy also in all maner of conuersacion, because it is writen▪ Be ye holy, for I am holy. And if so be that ye call on the father, which without respecte of person iudgeth accordyng to euery mannes worke, se that ye passe the tyme of your pylgremage in feare.

And forasmuche as Chryst woulde haue that daye to be vncertayn vnto vs, it behoueth you not to be in a securitie at any tyme, but alwayes hauing the loynes of your myndes girded, as menne readyly furnished to mete theyr Lordes comming, watchyng and sober, being alwayes stiered vp and put in mynde with the certayn and sure loking for of the euerlasting felicitie, which now is offred vnto all men that obey the Gospell: but yet it shalbe possessed at length, at suche tyme, as our Lorde Iesus Christ shall openly shewe hys maiestie vnto al men and vnto angelles and deuiles, howbeit they shall not come to that immortalitie, but onely those that in a maner forecast the same in this worlde, and according to the example of Iesus, being deade to the lustes of this worlde, lyue agayne agayne with him vnto innocencie, and contynue stedfastly in it, like lafull and right true sonnes that trust in the promises of god the father, and do after his prescribed commaundementes, and neuer slyde agayne into their olde conuersacion, whiche than through the igno|raunce of the Gospelles doctrine, was endaungered with worldly concupis|cences. For it is conuenient that you diffre from them in affectes and ma|ners, from whom you dissent in profession. The worlde is naught and from it you are already exempted and engrafted vnto Christ, which is righteous, holy and Innocent, and to this ende are you chosen and called of the father, the fountayne of al holines, that like as you are in your profession, so should you in al your life and doinges, be pure, vpright, and vnblameable. For the father will not acknowledge any to be his sonnes, but those that be like ma|nered vnto him. For in dede this same thing he ment whan he spake to our, auncetours. Leuitici the xix. Chapter. Be you holy, for I the lord your God am holy. The puritie of Moses lawe could not haue ben ynough for you: to absteine from touching of dead bodyes, to haue your fete washen, to absteine from the acte of matrimony: God will haue all oure conuersacion and all our whole harte to be fre from al spottes of synnes. For in dede these are the thinges, that make vs playnly impure in the sight of god. And although you cal vpon God by the name of a father, crieng for his helpe in al thinges, yet if you lyue in a filthy conuersacion, you may not trust that he wilbe mer|cifull vnto you, or acknowledge you for his children, seyng he estemeth no|man eyther for his kynred or for his estates sake, but onely after the merites of his conuersacion. For nether shal the lewe be pure, if his conscience be de|filed, ne yet shall the vncircumcised be vnpure, if he leade a godly and an in|nocent life.

For as muche as ye knowe how that ye were not redemed with corruptible thynges, (as syluer and golde) from youre vaine conuersacion, whiche ye receaue by the tradicion of the fathers: but with the precious bloude of Christe, as of a lambe vndefiled, and without spotte, which was ordeyned before hande euen before the woorld was made: but was

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declared in the last tymes for your sakes, which by his meanes do beleue on god, that raylsed him vp from death, and glorified hym, that ye myght haue faythe and hope toward God, euen ye whiche haue purified your soules thorowe the spirite, in obeyng the truthe, with brotherly loue vufayned, se that ye loue one another with a pure herte feruently, for ye are borne a newe, not of mortall seed, but of immortal, by the word of god, which lyueth and lasteth for euer. For al flesh is grasse, and all the glory of man is as the floure of grasse. The grasse wyddereth, and the floure falleth awaye, but the worde of the Lorde endureth euer. And this is the worde, which by the gospel was preached vnto you.

Therefore it remayneth that you which are desirous to haue this father mer|cifull vnto you, haue his vnauoydable iudgemēt alwayes before your eies, while you liue in this exile, & so order your cōuersaciō, that there be nothing wherfore the father may be offended, & iustly shut you out of the inheritaūce of the celestial countrey, as vnnaturall & disobedyent children. The greater the price is, wherwith Christe hath frely redemed you, so muche the greater hede ought you to take, lest for your wilfulnes and vnthankfulnes, you be turned agayn into your former bonde thraldom. There is none more myse|rable a bondage, than to bee the slaue of synne. Those that for a litle money are made fre frō theyr maisters bondage, & become of bondmē fre men, watch about them by al meanes, lest for theyr vnthankfulnes they may be drawen agayne into the bondage that they were in before: and will you than commit that offence to fall again into y^e old tyranny, to be willingly the bond slaues of Moses lawe, & had rather serue vaine obseruaunces, that your elders deliuered from one to an other vnto you, than to obey the gospel of God, seing you knowe that you were deliuered once from them, not with a commune tryfling price, as golde or syluer, but with an offring muche more holy than Moses lawe knoweth of? For you are not made cleane with the bloud of a calfe sprinkled, but with the precious bloud of Iesus Christe who like a lābe cleane without any spotte, pure and vndefiled from all filthinesse of synne, was offred for our synnes on the aultare of the crosse. Nether yet was that done by chaunce at all auentures, but the sonne of God was appointed to make this sacrifice from euerlastyng and before the makyng

of the worlde, that he might through his deathe reconcile the father vnto vs: howbeit the secret deuce and decre of Goddes purposed mynde, which was many long yeares vnknownen to the worlde, is now at length in these later times open|ly manifested, and a new matter is set forth before mennes eyes to loke vpon whiche in the purposed mynde of God was not new. And it was geuen for your saluacion sake, vnto whom Christe that was made man, dyed, and is preached, bestoweth thus muche, that wher as you had a vayne truste vpon the ceremonies of the lawe, now distrusting your selues, you must put your whole trust in God the father: who like as he would haue Christe to dye to wye awaye your synnes, euen so hathe he raysed him vp from death, and for the paynfull trauailes of this life which he suffred, he gaue him the glory of immortalitie: to thentente that as you haue beleued that whiche he hath done, in folowing his example, you might also trust surely to haue the same reward to be bestowed on you, in that you put your whole affiaūce in God, which what he hath already perfourmed in his sonne, the same also will he vndoubtedly performe in al them, which lyue after suche sort, that they may be worthyly accompted among the membres of Christ, in to whose body you are engrafted, synce that you were regenerate through baptisme in to hym. Before that tyme you did after your owne lustes, that is to say, embracing

carnall shadowes of thinges in stede of true ryght thinges: but now since you haue clensed your soules, not with the obseruacion of Moses purgelyng sacrifices, but in that you haue through faith obeyed the trueth of the gospell, whiche by the spyryte of Christe hath purged your consciences, you must endeouour your selues both to be correspondent vnto the head Christe in vprightnes of life, and be answerably like vnto the concorde of the body by an excedyng and a playne brotherly and an vnfeyned loue among your selues: that lyke as Christ loued you not after a comen sort, nor after a carnall maner of loue, euen so should you loue euery one other, with a spiritual loue. New kynred requireth new affeccion. Before this tyme you lewes loued lewes after a carnall affeccionate loue, but now beyng by a far other maner regenerate (not of a mortall & an earthly seede after the bodye, but of an immortall and a heauenly sede by the worde of God which lyueth and endureth for euer whose gospel you haue beleued) you shall loue the brethren with a heauenly loue. Moses lawe was geuen for a tyme. But the worde of God hathe brought forthe the lawe of the gospel vnto vs, whiche neuer shall perishe. The thing that procedeth from men is but for a season, but the thing that cometh from heauen, is euerlast|ing, as Esay sayd before: *All fleshe is as grasse, and all the glory of man as the floure of the fielde. The grasse is wythered, and his* • *loue fallen awaye, but the worde of the*

Lorde endureth for e/uer. This is the eternall worde of the eternall father, whom the shadowes of the former lawe in tymes past paynted out vnto vs, but nowe he is openly declared by the preachers of the gospell, and not onely vnto you, but vnto all them that receyue Christe with a syncere vpright fayth.

¶ The .ii. Chapter.

The texte.

Wherefore laye a syde all malicioushes and all gile, and fay•ednesse, and enuy, and all backbytyng: and as newe borne babes, desyre ye that mylke (not of the bodye, but of the soule) which is without disceite: that ye may grow there by (vnto saluacion) yf so be that ye haue tasted, howe gracyous the Lord is, to whom ye come, as vnto a liuing stone, disa|•wed of men, but chosen of God and precyous: and ye as •ing stones, are made a spiri|tuall house an holy priesthood, for to offer vp spirituall sacrificyes, acceptable to God by Iesus Christe.

F Orasmuche as you are lately borne againe by an heauenly generacion through the doctrine of the gospell, caste all the vices of your former conuersacion quyte away from you, yf there were any malyce, yf there were any deceite, yf there were any holowe heartednesse, yf there were any enuy, yf there were any backebytyng or cursed speakyng, and from henceforthe as babes newe borne, gredely couete that mylke, not of the body, but of the soule, the mylke that knoweth no deceyte, and is fitte for your age which is more harmelesse than strong, euen the mylke of the ghospels ordinaunce. For the ghospels doctryne hath his principls, it hathe his infancye, it hathe his dyet mete for weake tendre age:

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it hath also his farther growinges, finally it hath his perfite growē age. Those first thinges are not to be supped lothesomly, but gredily, yea and thrustily: neyther yet must you lyngre continually in them, but to procede from them stil vnto thinges of more perfeccion. For in dede it were euen a straunge thing if a man borne of his mother should be alwaies a babe and couet nothing els but mylke. And it behoueth you also to ware bigge, tyll you growe vnto perfite saluaciō, and not alwaies to sticke still in making the foundations, but to ryse by lytle and lytle vnto the perfite buyldyng of the house. For in case (according to the psalme wryters counsell) you haue tasted that the Lorde Iesus is swete, it is requisite for you to bee prouoked with that taste to sette your appetites vpon greater thynges. In humayne buyldynges, the stones neyther chaunge theyr place ne grow

any bigger: But in this buyldyng (which standeth vpon liuing stones) the chiefe principall stone whereof, and the stone that conteyneth all thynges, is the liuyng and eternall Iesus Christe, whiche of late (after the psalme writers prophecying) was cast away of menne, that is to were of the phariseis, who holding of their tēple that should go to naught, had no knowlledge of this heauēly building, howbeit he was chosen by the iudgement of God, and had in muche price, there is nothing to hinder, but that it may procede forward to the perfite finishyng of the buildyng. Therefore you must necessarily goe, through forewarde encrease of vertues, vnto Christ the liuing stone, the chosen stone, the stone preciously sette by in the sight of God, that you also being grounded vpon suche a foundation may be buildded vpon by litle and litle, vntyll you bee made spirituall temples muche more holy than the tēple that the Iewes brag of, and in the which temples muche more wholly priesthood is exercised than was vsed in that temple. For in it the leuites and priestes offered vp beastes, but in these spirituall temples you your selues offer vp spirituall sacrifices moste acceptable to God, who, as he is a spirite and not a bodye, so doeth he delyte in spirituall sacrifices, that you should nothing mynde the rites of Moses now being worne out through the preaching of the Gospell: in stedde of sundrye kyndes of brute beastes, you slea worldly and brutish affectes, lecherous lustes, pryde, wrath, enuie, desyre of reuengement, ryot, and couetousnes and in stedde of, incense, you offer pure prayers flying out of the aulter of a pure herte into heauen. These are the sacrifices that are offered at al seasons in the spirituall temple, and are at al tymes acceptably welcome vnto God. For those sacrifices of Moses are now all ready growen in to a lothesomenes, as the prophet Esaye beareth recorde. But these maner of sacrifices are contynually allowed through Iesus Christ, by whose commendacion the diligent seruice doinges of the Chrystians are acceptable vnto the father.

The texte.

Wherefore it is containd also in the scripture: behold I put in Sion a stone to be layed in the chiefe corner, electe and precious, and he that beleueth on him shall not be confounded. Vnto you therfore whiche beleue he is precious: but vnto them whiche beleue not, the stone whiche the buylders refused, the same is begunne to bee the head of the corner, and a stone that men stamble at, and a rocke wherat they be offended, whiche stamble at the woorde, and beleue not that, wheron they were set. But ye are a chosen generacion,

a royall priesthod, an holy naciō, a people which are wonne: that ye shuld shew the vertues of hym that called you out of darkenes, into his meruelous syght, which in tyme past were not a people, but are now the people of

God, which some tyme had not obtayned mercye, but no we haue votayned mercye.

There is no cause why you should be in any mystrust, as long as ye cleaue fast vnto the head Chryst, as long as you stande harde vpon the noble and •nmoueable ston Christ, of whom god spake in tymes past by the mouthe of Esaye: *Beholde I put in Sion a ston to be placed in the chief corner; tryed, chosen▪ and precious▪ And he that shall put his trust in hym, shall not be ashamed* And that whiche he spake of before hand, we se now al ready perfourmed. For the selfe same one stone was prelcious and •olsome vnto some, and to some hurtfull and noysome, vnto you he is iustly precious, because you are groūded surely vpō him, because you put your whole trust in him, and are preserued by his ayde agaynste al stor|mes of tempestes. But vnto them that had rather sticke still vnto Moses than vnto him, and haue reiected him, not willyng to haue hym put in the buylding that they purposed to buylde, he is contrary wise a reproche and a very destruccion. For him that they disdeyned to haue in their buylding, god wold haue to be head stone of the corner, by whom he might knyt toge|ther and conteyne as it were the wall on eithersyde, that is to saye, both the sortes of people, of the Gentiles and of the Iewes: by whose strong defence the buylding should be safely preserued against all assaultes, & him should, who so euer were aduersaries vnto this new buylding, stumble at and ••ne against. And they stumble whosoever be offended at the worde of the Gos|pell, and beleue it not, seing Moses lawe made them ready before hande to this ende, that they shoulde beleue the gospell, as sone as the thing was trully performed in dede, that the lawe signified in shadow. Therfore those that haue disallowed Christ god hathe also disallowed them agayne. But as for you, whom they reiecte with Christ, he hath made that chosen kynred, wher|of Moses spake in tymes past, that holy nacion, and peculiar people, whom god hath take to him selfe w^t an excellent price: that like as the people of the Hebrues being deliuered in tymes paste by Moses leading from the tyra|nye of Egypt, and conueied through so many daungerous matters into the lande that they had long hoped vpon, preached vnto the worlde the good|nes of god shewed to them, warde: euen so you hauing in remembraunce his fre liberalitie towardses you also, should glorifie among al men the wonder|full power of god, which by a new meane hauyng conquered the enemies of your saluacion, hathe deliuered you out of the darkenes of ignoraunce and vicious lyuing, into his wōderful light of the gospels trueth, by the which all the errours of the gentiles and shadowes of the Iewes are cleane wyped away. Vnto you therfore hathe chaunced this honour, that they which per|secuted Christ, surely reckoned vpō to them selues, & yet cleane contrary, the matters being turned vpside downe, the thing chaunced that Osee sayd before should come. The people which before were the most abiectes, that is to say, far of from god, is now a peculiar people vnto god. *And the people whom god had reiected as*

vnworthy of his mercy, hath felt by experience the mercy of god without helpe of circ•lcision of the lawe, and is receiued through the only gospel like faith into the felowship of the sonne of god.

The texte.

Dearlye beloued, I beseche you as straungers and pylgremes, abstayue▪ from fleshly lustes, whiche fyght agay•ste the soule, and se that ye haue honeste conuersacyon amonge the Gentyles, that where as they backbyte you as ouyll doc•s, they maye se youre good woorkes, and prayse God, in the daye of disitacyon. Submytte youre selues therfore vnto all manner ordynaunce of manne for the Lordes sake, whether it •ee vnto the

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Kynge, as vnto the •he•e heed: other vnto rulars, as vnto them that are sent of hym, for, the punishment of euell dowars: but for the laude of them, that do well. For so is the wyl of God, that with wel doying ye maye stoppe the mouthes of foulyshe and ignoraunte men▪ as fre, and not as hauyng the libertye for a cloke of malicyousnes, but euen as the seruauntes of God. Honoure all men. Loue brotherly felowshipe. Feate God, honoure the kyng. Ser•uauntes, obey your masters with feare, not onely yf they be good and courteous: but also though they be frowarde. For this is thāke worthy: yf a man for conseyence towarde God endure grefe, and suffer wronge vnderesued. For what prayse is it, yf whell ye be buffe•ed for your fautes, ye take it patiently? But and yf when ye do wel, ye suffer wrong and take it patiently, then is there thanke with God.

Than sence ye acknowledge the singular liberalitie of god towardses you, whome he hathe redemed with the price of bloud, whom he hathe reconsyled vnto himselfe by the deathe of his sonne, whome his will was to haue to bee the membres of his onely begotten, and the lyuyng stones of the heauenly buylding, whome he hathe chosen into the right of children, and called into the enheritaunce of immortalitie: I beseche you (deately beloued) to frame youre selues in holynes of life like vnto your owne dignitie, like vnto the gentil goodnes of god, and vnto so high a rewarde. You are regenerate vn|to heauen, being in this woorld as foryners and straungers: make spede thither where your countrey is, & where the enheritaunce of heauen is layled vp in stoare for you: that you be not called away frō this desyre by earthllye and grosse appetites which with all manner of engynes make warre and •atail agaynste the spirite which is gredyly desyrous of heauenly thinges. Let your conuersacion accorde with your profession, that your maners may allure vnto Christe other folkes also that are paganes, among whome you lyue: vnto whome it is so muche requisite for you to geue no maner of occa|sion, that they

maye rightfully iudge euil of the gospelles doctrine (yf they shoulde perceauē you in the commune custome of life to bee no whit better than other be,) that the entier vprightenes of your manners and wel doing towards all menne, may stoppe theyr backbyting reportes wherwith they speake euil of you, for malice that they beare to Christ, and for the hate of religion, whiche they suppose to be wicked supersticion: whiche thinges euil dently perceaued, they shal repent also, and acknowlege their owne errour, being inspired with the mercye of god, whan it shal please him, whiche hath chosen you, to draw them to him also: and that they maye than by your godlly workes glorifie him, whome before they abhorred, because they knew him not. This worlde hath also an order of his owne, whiche by occasion of religiō ought not to be disturbed, as much as may be sauing the glory of christ. Euen so Christ would haue you to be free from synnes, that you shoulde ne|uertheles suffer euery thing willingly for the gospelles busynes sake, obeying and submytting your selues not only vnto Christian magistrates, but vnto the heathen magistrates also: whether he be a kyng, you must obey him as most excellent in the publike autoritie: whether they be rulers, you muste obey them, as by whom being sent to trauail abroade, the king administreth the matters of the cōmon wealth. Nether let it moue you, that they bee heathens, that they be Idolatours, but acknowledge their office that is necessa|rye vnto the cōmune wealthe, which consisteth of sondry kyndes of men and religions. For they beare rule with autoritie to restryne offenders and wicked persones by feare of punyshement, & to allure those that bee good with rewardes to doe theyr duetie. You haue not nede of their fearing, inasmuch as you do of your owne accorde more than mans lawes require. They haue

no nede of mannes commendacion, whom the rewarde of heauen maketh fer|uent: and yet it is requisite also to acknowlege them with the other. For this is the will of the most hyghe God youre Prynce, that you geue none occasion vnto their inconsiderate ignoraunce, whereby they myghte proueably call the gospelles profession to blame, if they perceaued you to set naught by their a|utoritie. That whiche other doe for feare of the lawes, do you willyngly of your owne accorde, yea more habundauntlye than other doe, that you maye declare youre selues to be ryght free men in dede. For he is free that of his owne mind and willyngly doeth as he shoulde doe rightly. God forbydde that you should abuse the pretence of the gospelles veritie to synne more licenciously. You owe not bonde seruice vnto men but inasmuche as you are the seruauntes of God, you shall submitte youre selues, for his glories sake, vnto all men gladly and willynglye. If any duetie therefore, if any honour be duely belongyng euen to them that be heathens, either for the publike office sake that they

beare, or for affinitie sake, do that throughly vnto all men, lest they being anye whit offen|ded, be broughte more farther of from the profession of the gossell: yet for all that, it is reason that you loue them specially, whom the commune profession hath made brethren vnto you. Feare God, whose eies no man can begile: And concernyng the kyng, there is no cause why you should be afrayed of him, seing he is dreadfull to none but to euyll doers, but yet acknowledge hys autoritie in those thynges, that he exacieth of you without hynderaunce of godlynes. He demaundeth custome, paye it him: he exacteth tribute, geue it him. That which those that be free ought to do to the Magistrates, thoughe they be heal|thens, bonde seruantes ought to do vnto their maisters: from seruing of whō baptisme maketh them not free. But they ought rather with greater reuerence to acknowledge them, not onely yf they be good and sobre men, but also if they be sore men and harde sharpe men, lest peraduenture beyng offended with your frowarde maners doyng otherwise than you ought to doe, they laye the fauite vnto the profession, and be dryuen the more farther of from it, whereunto they ought rather to be encensed and allured by your honest behauiour. Some wyl saye: It is a sore mater to beare the tyrannye of Prynces, it is a sore mater to abyde the crueltie of maisters: For Prynces spoyle, exacte, and punyshe: and maysters wyth whyppes and buffe•tes all to teare them that are faultles. These maters woulde ryghtly seme not worthy to be borne, if it were ascribed vnto them and not rather vnto God. Their wickednes deserueth not thus muche, that these thynges should be suffred at their handes, but so is the wil of God, that youre goodnes shoulde turne their maliciousnes in to the glorie of Christ. For after suche sorte is your pacience acceptable to God, whan beyng afflicted vnderuedly, you suffre neuertheles contentedly, not for feare of men, but for the glory of God. Communely there is no despyght more impaciently taken, than whan men are not faultye.

But among Christians it is ferre otherwise, for among them like as euery one is the beste, euen so doeth he couet to be mooste acceptable vnto God. And the more inwa•••ly he loueth God, so muche the more chearfullye he suf|freth whatsoeuer •pperteyneth to the glorye of God. But what garmercye were it, yf you suffre whan you are buffeted for naughtye

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doynge? The conscience of the faulte teacheth thys, that euery man can abyde his deserued peynes and holde his peace. But whan you suffre patiently the sorowes that are done vnto you for weldoinges, you come in fauour with god, for whose cause sake you suffre wyllinglye.

For hereunto verely were ye called: for Christ also suffered for vs, leuinge vs an ensample, that ye shoulde folowe his steppes, which dyd no sinne, nether was there gyle founde in his mouth▪ which when he was reuiled, reuiled not agayne: when he suffered, he thre|tened not: but committed the vengeance to hym that iudgeth righteouslye whyche hys owne selfe bare our synnes in his body •n the tree, that we beinge delyueted from synne, shoulde lyue vnto righteousnes. By whose stripes, ye were healed. For ye were as shepe going astray: but are nowe turned vnto the shepherd and byshop of your solles.

Your innocencie might disdaynfully grudge at this, but that Christe belyng innocent suffred greater haynous peines for your sake. This is your profession, vpon this condicion are you called into his body, that you myghte follow the example of suffryng which he hath left vnto you, and entring in by the same fote|steppes you might thrust in vnto euerlastyng glory by the same way that he atteyned vnto it. What sorowe was it that he suffred not, whiche was crucified with theues? And what is more innocent than he which not only com|mytted no faulte at all, but also there was no maner of gyle at any tyme found in his tongue? whā they bitterly reuiled him, he gaue none euill wordes again, but rather besought the father to forgyue them.

Whan he was bounden, whan he was beaten, whan he was nayled on the crosse, he threatened no vengeance but referred all vengeance vnto the father, whiche iudgeth not of affeccion, but accordyng to iustice, Christe in the meane tyme playng the intercessour and not the on settour. As for vs al|beit we now folowe innocencie, yet with our naughty synfulnes we had afore tyme iustely deserued the vengeance of God. But Christe, forasmuche as he was indaungered with no synne, yet he caryed the burthen of our synnes vpon his owne bodye that he myghte ease vs of oure burthen, and was offred on the tree of the crosse as a brent offerynge for oure synnes, and by hys vnderdeserued death he put away the deathe that was due vnto vs, that we shoulde in the meane tyme folowe the example of his death and resurreccion, and that beyng dead vnto our olde synnes and lustes, wherunto we were addicte and dyd seru|uice, we shoulde lyue from henceforth vnto innocencie, vnto the which he being the fountayne of all innocencie hath consecrated vs, whiche hathe taken ou•e wickednes him selfe, that he myght geue his righteousnes vnto vs. We had offended, and he was beaten: The fault was ours, and the punyshement lyght cruelly vpon him. So y• accordyng to Esayes prophecie, we were made whole by his stripes. Him therfore you are bounden to thanke for youre innocencie: and in that God imputeth not the synnes of your former lyfe, you are bounde to thanke his bondes, his scourgeinges, his woundes, his crosse and his death. For ye were scatred before tyme lyke shepe withoute a keper, strayenge some one waye some an other, as euerye mannes phantasye ledde him, thynkyng

you myghte lawfullye do whatsoeuer lyked youre selfe, but you are nowe conuerted from youre olde erreure vnto Christe Iesus the shepehearde and Curate of youre soules. Yf you folowe hym in sufferynge afflye|cyons of sorowes wythoute deseruyng, you shall throughe hys leadynge

come vnto the glory of immortalitie.

¶ The .iii. Chapter.

The texte.

Likewise ye wiues be in subiection to your husbandes, that euen they whych obey not the word, may with out the worde be wonne by the conuersacion of the wiues, while they behold your chaste conuersacion coupled with feare. Whose apparel shal not be outwarde with broyded heare, and hanginge on of golde, ether in puttinge on of gorgeous apparell: but let the hid man which is in the heart, be without all corruption, so that the spirite be at rest & quiet, which spirite is before God a thing muche set by. For after thys maner in the olde tyme dyd the holy women, which trusted in God, tier them selues, and were obedyente to their husbandes, euen as Sara obeyed Abraham, & called hym Lorde: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do wel and are not afrayed for any terrour.

Nowe lyke as free men ought to allure y^e prynces and publyke magistrates, and euen so oughte bonde seruauntes to allure their maisters vnto the fauouring of the gospell, by their obel|dient diligence (whych purchaceth frendship in euery place) or in dede not to prouoke them by occasion, if perauenture they be vncureable: euen so ought the wiues also shewe themselves obedyent vnto their husbandes, not onelye yf they be Christians, but to them also, that haue not yet embraced the doctrine of the gospell. For in dede it maye possiblie come to passe, that suche as oure preaching doeth not stiere, the entier vpryghtnes, godlynes, womanlynes, sobrenes, chastitie, and sufferauce of the wyfe, maye ouercome and mollyfie them, and in conclusion wyne them vnto Christ. For whan they shall perceaue theyr wyues maners chaunged through baptisme, whan they shall see the examplar of true vertue in them, they shall peraduenture be enflamed, the affection of wedlocke not a lytell forewardyng to the same purpose, that as they be felowes of one bedde, so they would mynd to be felowes of one profession. For sincere good demeanour hath very sharpe pryckes, whiche, yf a man do marke it nerely, bryngeth to passe manye tymes, that carnall loue is turned into a spirituall loue. That maner of loue is occa|sioned by welfauourednes of

beawtie, and behaiour of apparel, helpyng the fauour of beawtie forewarde. And behaiour is occasioned by the fayre goodllynes of an entier good hearte, shynyng in her manners. Therefore it behoueth not wyues, whiche haue professed Christe, to deuise howe they maye set forthe themselues pleasauntly in their husbandes eies, after the cōmune custome, with theyr heare craftly broyded, or with puttinge on of precious stones, or gold, and purple rayment, and with other trymmyng of the bodye, whiche is shewed outwardly. For what other thyng should come of this gayre, but that they should loue their wyues body for the vse of fleshely lust? And what a porcion of man is the body? This rather they ought to studye for, that theyr husban|des may be enticed by their goodly garnyshed maners, and so to loue the secret hidden mynde and hearte, yf they shall perceyue her to be pure, and spotted w^t•• knacke of viciousnes: and if they shall see, contrarie to the commune maner of women, no lyght affeccion in that woman, which women comunly haue: no intemperaunce, no wrath, no enuye, no seking of preeminence, no arrogancie, •o ouerthwart bibble bable, but a softe, mylde, tractable & gentyll spirit. This is an excellent and a gorgeous apparell in the e•es of God. By this maner of decking they muste chiefly deserue to haue their husbandes heartes.

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By this kynde of wooing, euen certayne holy women in times past (which fixed their whole hope, not in slyppery and transitorye thinges, but in God) set forth themselues to please their husbandes, not with gold or precious stones, or pur|ple, but with sobrenes & obedient diligence, wherby the fearcenes of an husbā|des disposition is most easily aswaged. So Sara obeyed Abraham, callyng him Lorde, where as she was hys wyfe, & not his drudgeing hande mayde, but submitted her selfe vnder his subieccion for sobrenes sake. For althoughe it be not fitte for a man to vse a lordlynes towards his wife, yet there is an autori|tie, which if he in somthynges abuse, yet it standeth with the womans modestie to obeye in place. To be briefe, lyke as they are Abrahams true and very right sonnes, that folowe thexample of his fayth: euen so are you Saraes daugh|ters, which resemble y• excellent good womans maners & manly substaūialnes of mynde, trymmyng vp your selues with good workes, & reposing all youre trust in God: & hauing the fruicion of his ayde, there is no cause at al, why you should be afrayed of womans frailtie.

The texte.

Lyke wyse ye men dwel with them according to knowlege: geuing honour vnto the wyfe, as vnto the weker vessel, & as vnto them that are heires also of the grace of lyfe, that your praiers be not hindered.

And as it is the office of matrones, with chast obedience, & holy maners, and wyth mylde softenes to ouercome their husbandes: euen so is it your parte, O you men, in no wise to abuse your autoritie towardes your wyues, as mē plalyng the tyrannes, in that they submit thēselues vnto you, but be rather so much the lesse lordely towardes them, in y[•] they make them selves your handmaidens. They are companions of all your estates and thynges, what so euer befalleth. Let them perceiue you to be handsome men to lyue withall, & let your wisdom succour the frailtie of their womankynde. And the more stronger you are tha[•] they in the strength of hert & body, so much more it behoueth you to releue wo|mens infirmitie, that by youre instruction & by your gouernaunce, they maye be made better, & as it were setting aparte that kynde, they maye waxe manlye in gospellike godlynes. For they are not Christian husbandes, that haue wylues only to the vse of copulacion: but they ought rather to endeuour, that their wyues maie be theyr cōpanions in fastinge, almosededes dooing, of watching, and of prayeng: so that those women, which are called to the cōmune reward of eternall lyfe, as well as their husbandes, maye earnestly set their myndes to do these thynges also communely with their husbandes. In christian mariage, there is nothing, or in dede very lytle, to be geuen vnto voluptuousnes, & very muche vnto Godlynes. Wherin yf bothe parties will consent, and thereup^{••} you refrayne frō bodyly d[•]ale, your prayers shal not be interrupted. And pralyer is a sacrifice wherwith god must be sacrificed vnto, euery daye.

The texte.

In conclusiō, be ye al of one mynd, & of one heart loue as brethrē, be pitiful, be courte^{•••} (meke) not rendring euill for euill, or rebuke for rebuke: but contrariwise blesse: know^{•••} that ye are thereunto called, euen y[•] ye should be heires of y[•] blessing. For he that doth l^{•••} after lyfe, and loueth to se good dayes, let hym refraine his tonge from euil, and his ^{•••}|pes that they speake no guyle. Let hym eschewe euil and do good: let hym seke peace, ^{•••}ensue it. For the eyes of the Lorde are ouer the ryghteous, and hys eares (are open) ^{••••} their prayers. Agayne, the face of the Lorde is ouer them that do euil.

Therefore lyke as men haue some one kynd of peculiar offices, some ha^{••}

other, euen so this becometh euery one the rather to remembre him selfe, that he which hath professed Christ, ought to excel others in those thinges, that be ma|ters of tried honestie. Howbeit this is the cōmune

office of all men, y[•] lyke as al haue one self same profession, & like as through baptisme you are engrafted in to one selfe same body: euen so let al be through concord, of one self same mind. Let not age, estate, cōdiciō or sōdry being in diuerse cōūtres disseuer you a son|dre, which thinges among others do many times ministre occasion of hate and contencion. But as for you, it behoueth you to be most fast ioyned together, selyng all one baptisme hath regenerated you vnto God: seyng you haue all one father in heauē: inasmuche as dependyng of one head Christe, you are mēbres of all one body: and forasmuche as the profession of the gospell hath made you brethren indifferently, and for that cause sake the father of heauen hathe called all mē vnto all one rewarde of immortalitie without differēce, whether they be poore, whether they be riche, whether they bonde seruautes, whether they be maisters, whether they be husbandes, whether they be wyues, whether they be lewes or gentyles. In this behalfe there is no difference at all, and therfore there oughte to be no dissension nor highe statelly loking.

For a greate deale more shall Christian charitie, that humbleth it selfe, wyne, than auctoritie that exacteth. For there is no concorde amonge menne that be arrogaunt, fearce, & louers of them selues. If the mēbres in a beastes bodye do succour euery one other, and in case any thyng chaunce to any one of them whether it be good or badde, euerye one of them reconeth it as their owne: and if those whom nere kynred of bloud knytteth together, are both glad and sorye for the cōmodities & discommodities of their kynsfolkes: how much more cō|uenient is it, y[•] you beyng knytte together by so manye wayes, shoulde expresse this consent to be touched with other mens wealth & sorowes, no lesse than with your own. So shal you expressely shewe a right brotherly charitie, if those that be of the more wealthy estate, disdeine not them y[•] haue not the worldes wealth, but be sory for their euils, & to their powers succour thē: if they that be in hygh power & autoritie, presse not nor despise those that are of y[•] lower sort, but wyth familiar gentylnes & good wordes apply them selues familiarly vnto their in|feriours: y[•] there may be an indifferent equalitie, & that christian charitie maye ioyne together those, y[•] the state of the worlde hath disseuered. God forbyd, that you should be desirous of reuengement, seyng it is your part to nourishe con|corde, not only with the brethren & suche as be godly, but also, yf it be possible, with all men. With those that good are, it behoueth to stryue who may do most good: & with thē that naught are, to stryue in pacient suffryng, or in doying thē good also, by which meanes like as the very wilde beastes are ouercome, euē so it somtymes mollifieth the malice of men, wherein was no hope of amendemēt. Be not you willing therfore, to requite wrong for wrong, or scoldyng for scol|dyng. For so shall it come to passe, that you shalbe euel also, in that you folow the xāple of them y^e be euil: but rather recompense you a good turne for wrong, & good wordes for bad, y^e through your inuincible goodnes, you may ouercome

& ouerthrowe their malice. For god hath not called you to this ende, to haue y• vpper hand with naughtie dedes doing, & naughtie wordes speakyng, but y• through your weldoyng vnto all men, & wel speakyng vnto all, men you maye worthyly heare y• ioyfull word: *Come ye blessed of my father possesse the kingdome.* To do euil vnto good mē, it is more thā y•propretie of mad beastes: & to speake euil against them y•speake wel, it exceedeth y• propretie of vile tongued ruffiōs.

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To deserue well of them that deserue euill, and to speake well of them that be euyll speakers and backebytours, is thoffice of Christian vertue. If any man thynke this an harde matter, let him heare the Psalme wryttour enspired with the spirite of God, that commaundeth the very same: whoso is desirous ({quod} he) to loue lyfe, and to se good dayes, let him refrayne his tongue from euell: lette him restrayne his lyppes, that they speake no deceate: let him eschewe euil, and doe good: let him seke for peace, and folowe it: For the eies of the Lorde are vp|on the ryghteous, and his eares are attentiuē vnto their prayers. Contrary|wyse, the countenance of the Lorde is vpon them that do euyll. Therefore yf we wyll haue God to be liberally good vnto vs, let vs be good vnto all men: yf we wyll escape his vengeance, let vs hurte no body at all.

I wyll not heare the reason, that mans affeccion wyll perchaunce murmu|ryngly repyne in this behalfe: If I doe not reuenge iniurye, the vnpunysht libertie wyl prouoke many mo to do hurt. But there is nothyng, that shal kepe you more safe from iniurie, than yf you eyther patiently suffre it, or els do good for wrong. There is none ende of harme doing, as often as wyth wretched en|coūtryng one with an other, reuiling is made double through reuiling againe, and iniurie is made double iniurie, by iniurie doing agayn. If no man resiste, naughtinesse shall cease, or at least waxe faynt.

The texte.

Moreouer, who is it that wyll harme you if ye folowe that whyche is good? Yea, happy are ye, if any trouble happen vnto you for ryghteousnes sake. Be not ye afrayed for any terrour of them, neyther be ye troubled, but sanctifie the Lorde God in your hear|tes. Be redy alwayes to geue an answeare to euery man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, and that with mekenes & feare, hauing a good conscience that where as they backbyte you as euil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conuersacyon in Chryste.

Who would couet to doe harme, yf you studye to do good for all men, and to hurte no man? But yf there be anye found so vtterly blynd, that for malyce they beare to vertue or throughe ignoraunce do persecute you, I praye you, in what thing can they hurt you? They wyll take awaye youre money, whiche yf they were not, you must shortly leaue behynd you: they wyll torment the body, and wyll slea you, which shoulde shortly dye, yf they were not. All these thyn|ges, forasmuche as they are done vnto you for Godlynnes sake, shall not onely bryng no damage vnto you at all, but also greatly encrease your vauntage. By these euell turnes doynge, they augment your rewarde of euerlastyng fellicitie. He that loseth a good meanyng hearte, he is hurted in dede: but whan that is safe, all is gayne, whatsoeuer the worlde thynketh is losse: and it is blessednes, whatsoeuer they thynke is sorowfulnesse. Therefore it is in you to bryng to passe, that no violence of sorowes can do you harme by any waye. Whatsoeuer the naughtynesse of men shall take awaye from you, the free lar|ges of God shall restore it agayne with excedyng great vauntage. So that yf you haue the fruicion of God, you haue no cause to be afrayed of mens threat|nynges, or to be disquieted with the violence of sorowes, neyther be you troubl|led in your mynde, in the myddes of the stormes of afflictions, as though you were destitute of Goddes helpe. Neither speake you cursedly vnto men that punyshe you throughe ignoraunce, but rather glorifie you the lorde God in your heartes, whiche to his seruantes turneth all thynges in to the best, whe|thersoeuer chaunseth ioye or aduersitie. Therefore he is euer worthy to be

prayed, albeit a man can not alwaies with worde of mouthe, yet with affection of the heart he maye euery where, and at all tymes. Hys enemyes are not to be prouoked with scoldynges, but wheresoeuer anye hope shall offre it selfe, that they maye be drawen vnto Christe, be you prompte and ready to answer whol|soeuer desireth to knowe, with what confidence, and throughe what hope, you set naught by the commodities of this life, and suffre the incommodities so palciantly. And that do you not disdeignefully, nor tauntyn|glye, as thoughe you were offended at them, but with al mildenes and reuerence, that is to say, vsing a good conscience of your owne, althoughe you can not be hable to perswade them. For it is not ynoughe for Christians, to speake thinges that are true and worthy of Christ: but also to speake after suche sorte, that the verye reason of your talke maye declare, that you are not in hande with your own busines, but that you respecte the glorie of Christe, and the saluation of them, whiche you speake vnto. This shalbe the surest argument to make them ashamed, which slaundre your conuersation, that you leade accordyng to Christes doctrine, as thoughe it were a countrefaict and a naughty conuersacion. For countrefaict vertue, althoughe it otherwise

begile men with his iuggling, yet whan it com|meth once to suffring of punishementes, it breaketh out and bewrayeth it self. There is nothing but a good conscience, and a conscience that dependeth wholly of God, that is hable chearefully to beare all thinges, and to be so farre frō intendyng reuengement, that he goeth about also to do good to them, of whom he is punished.

The texte.

For it is better (yf the wyll of God be so) that ye suffre for well doing, then for euil doing. For asmuche as Chryst hath once suffred for sinnes, the iust for the vniust, to bring vs vnto God, and was killed, as pertaining to the fleshe: but was quickned in the spirit. In which spirit he also went and preached vnto the spirites that were in prison, whych somtyme had ben disobedient, when the long suffering of God was once loked for in the daies of Noe, while the Arke was a preparing: wherin a few, y^e is to say, viii. solles, were saued by the water, lyke as baptisme also now saueth vs, not the puttynge away of the fylth of the fleshe: but in that a good conscience consenteth to God, by the resurreccion of Iesus Christ, whyche is on the righte hande of God: and is gone into heauen, Aungelles, powers, and myght, subdued vnto hym.

Let it not moue you, that you harmeles folkes suffre sorowes at their han|des, whiche be harmedoers: but rather it is in that behalf the more easely to be borne, whatsoeuer is done vnto you. For it is better for you, if it be the wyll of God, that you suffre these thinges that you suffre, for wel doyng, than for euil doyng. For he that is punysshed for his euil dedes, suffreth that he hath deser|ued: but the punyshementes that you suffre, turne to the glory of Christe, and to the heaped encrease of your felicitie. It is a gloriouse thyng for you to fol|lowe the example of your prince. Thus he aduaunced the glory of God the fa|ther, he beyng all together without synne, was taken, bounden, beaten, spytte vpon, crucified, and dyed for our synnes, where as he had no synne at all. The ryghtuous, for the vnryghtuous, the faultes for the faultye, suffred paynes, gladly obeyng the fathers will, that he myghte presente vs, that were synners, cleane and without spotte vnto the father: that we also folowyng his example, shoulde lyue harmeles amonge harmedoers, and that we beyng made, good shoulde suffre for the wealth of them that naught are. He dyed onely once for all and for temporall affliction was endowed with lyfe euerlastyng, that we beyng once redemed from synnes, shoulde not slyde backe agayne to the same.

It is Christ than that hath made vs cleane, being delyuered to death for the

weakenes of the humaine body which he had receiued, but he was raised to life agayne by the power of the spirite, whyche coulde not be ouercome wyth any affliccions. For the same tyme that his dead body was closed in the graue, he being alyue in spirite pearced vnto the helles: & lyke as vnto men endued with mortall bodye, he preached the doctryne of the gospell in his bodylye presence, which those that beleued, attayned saluacion, and those that refused to beleue, purchaced to them selues the heape of eternal damnacion: euen so his body belyng laied aparte, his spirite went vnto them, which being deliuered of their bo|dies, lyued in the helles, and preached vnto them, that nowe is the time present wherein they should receyue the rewarde of their godlines, for y^e in tymes past they ^eearing the iustice of god, nether reuenged them selues of euilles, & liued faultles among the faultye: and declared, that they suffred condyng punyshe|mentes, which in the daies of Noe, when the Arke was furnisshed, & the floude was loked for, that God being prouoked by mortall mennes wickednes would send vpon them, beleued not, but abused the gentilnes of God, when they sawe the thing, that he threatned, put of for a certayn of yeares. Therefore when the floude came, it destroyed all, except a very fewe, that is to saye, no moe but onely eight persons, which according to Noes counsel, went into the arke, & were not drowned in the flood. And therefore euen in those tymes faythe wanted not h^e rewarde. For God suffred not those to perishe, that trusted in him with al their whole her^e. Neither can the vnbeleuers escape y^e vengeaūce of God, although you be no reuengers. For it is ynough for you, that you obeye God, but as for the punyshement of the rest, refe^ere that to hym.

Now^e that, whiche N^ees A^eke was vnto them, is baptisme vnto you: that same thyng that the floud was vnto them, is the eternal punishement vnto the wicked, and preached vnto them, that obey not the gospel. It was ynough for Noe to haue tolde them of the floud that was to come: It was ynough to haue shewed, by what meanes they myght escape the daungier, yf throughe repen|taunce they would haue aswaged y^e wrath of god, which they had prouoked vpon thēselues by theyr own wickednes. And so let your vpryghtenes be ynoughe vnto you: let it be ynough for you to haue declared vnto other, what rewarde i^e prepared for them that beleue the gospel, & what payne abideth the vnbeleuers. If there be but a fewe sauēd by fayth, it shall not be layed to your charge. If a great part of men perishe throughe vnbelefe, they perishe through their owne faulte. After this sorte it was the wyll of God to vtter the difference bel|twene the good and the badde. Baptisme receiued as it ought to be, preserueth agaynst destruccion, and wassheth awaye the fylthynes, not of bodyes but of soules. But baptisme beyng broken promisse withall, destroyeth for euer, and wyndeth into so muche the more haynous rageing streames of wickedness^e.

Therefore the thing that is saluacion to some hauing faythe, doth bringe destruccion to the vnbeleuers and suche as are rebellions agaynst fayth.

Notwithstandinge it is not ynough for you, that through the floude of baptisme your synnes are perished, and that wicked lustes of the former conuersacion are lost, onles ther be present a good conscience also in all the lyfe after correspon|dent to the benefit of God. Christ died, howbeit but only once: he is risen again neuer to dye: and vnto vs the synfulnesses of oure former olde lyfe are in ly●● sort slayne by the death of Christ, that we shoulde afterwarde lyue agayne to

innocencie, and neuer slyde backe agayne in to synnes, as muche as lyeth in vs. That shall come to passe, if we shall, as it were setting inortalytie apart, desil●ou sly aspire vnto y●countrey of heauen w^t al our whole hertes, the enheritaūce wh●rof abydeeth them that obey the gospel. For so Iesus Christe rose agayne, tha● he would not make long taringe after that vpon earth, but cōueyed him selfe out of mortall mennes companye vp into heauen: and there hauynge the fruicion of the glory of immortalitie, sitteth on the fathers right hande, not w^tout a body, but suche a body as death hath now no title to it at all: And whyle death goeth about the swalowe vp the innocente, it is vtterly swallowed vp it selfe: and while death surely reconeth to haue gotten a great praye, it became a praye it selfe. Finally Christes victorie, is our victorye: and the glory that went before in him, is shewed vnto vs, in case we continue styll in the thyng that we haue begon, and sticke harde in his fotesteppes. Againste him the tormentes of the wicked preuailed nothing at all: but in his pacient suffryng of them he gate the victorie, he triumpheth and raigneth alofte, sitting in heauen aboue all aungelles, or whatsoeuer vertue and power there is besydes. Vnto you he hath opened the waye into heauen, that by the same way that he entred in, you maye also thrust in thycke and treefolde into the same place. The enheritaunce is ready and certaine, the possession wherof he hath also entred for your sakes, so that you expresse your selues worthy of it: that is to saye, if you set your stuldies vpon the innocencie (which he hath frely geuen) to do good vnto all men, yea euen to the euyl and those that punyshe you, as much as vnto you perteylneth.

¶ The .iiii. Chapter.

The texte.

For as much then as Christ hath suffred for vs in the fleshe, arme ye your selues lyke|wyse with the same mynde: for he which suffereth in the fleshe ceaseth from sinne, that he hence forwarde shoulde lyue (as muche tyme as he remayneth in the fleshe) not after the lustes of men, but after the wyl of God. For it is suffycient for vs that we haue spent the tyme that is past of the life, after the will of the Gentils walkyng in wantones, lustes, in excesse of

wines, in excesse of eating, in excesse of drinking (in dronkennes) and in abhomi|nable idolatry. And it semeth to them an inconuenient thing, that ye runne not also with them vnto the same excesse of riot, and therfore, speake they euil of you, which shall geue accomces to him, that is ready to iudge quicke & dead. For vnto this purpose verelie was the Gospel preached also vnto the dead, that they shoulde be iudged lyke other men in y[•]•she, but should liue before God in the spirit. The end of al thinges is at hand▪

F Or as muche than as Christe your Prynce and head folowed not the pleasures of thys lyfe, but throughe suffrynge of afflyceions for a tyme came vnto the glorye of heauen, and seing that he hath conquered the aduersaries with the weapons of paciente sufferance: it is reason that you, which professe your selues to be his disciples, shoulde arme your selues with the lyke purpose of mynde. Innocencie of lyfe, is the most surest armour: and chri|stian pacience is the fortresse that can not be beaten downe. He that is gyrded with pacience, is sure that no man can be hable to hurt him. Whosoeuer is deade together with Christ after the fleshe, hath so geuen ouer the synfulnes of his former conuersacion, that he is playnly deade to humayne desyres, so that now he is not tickled with gredynes of renowme, he is not prouoked with de|syre

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of reuengemente, but all the reste of hys tyme, that is geuen hym in thys sely carkas, lyueth all together whole to the wyll of God, whom onelye his •elsyre is to please, of whom also he lokethe for the rewarde of a good conscience, and vnto him he referreth the vengeaunce takyng of the wycked. Whosoe•er is readily prepared to suffre martyrdome, is not touched with the pleasure • of this worlde. For thys he thynketh with him selfe: God forbydde, that I beyng once done vpon the crosse with my Christ, shoulde goe downe to the vices that I haue forsaken: and that I beyng once appointed vnto euerlastyng felicitie, shoulde be tombled backe agayne to this worldes delices, whiche are not only shorte, but also folyshe: It is euen large ynough that I being a straunger frō Christe, haue spent the tyme past in folyshe lustes, whiche the prophane Hea|thens do filthiely serue, beyng addicte and geuē to wantones, to fleshly lustes, to dronkenes, to excessyue bankettynges, and to abomynable image worshypp|pynges. These pranks we are glad we haue left behynde vs, by the goodnes of Christe: and as often as we loke backe at them, we shrugge for feare to remembre suche fylthynes of lyfe and so great blynde darkenes of ignoraunce. Nowe in stedde of outragious luste, chastitie is pleasaunte: for •iote, tempe|rate fare: for wynebybbyng, sobrietie: for superstitious worshypping of ima|ges, true godlynes and

deuoute worshyppynge of the luyng God, vnto whō the mooste acceptable sacrifice that maye be, is a mynde pure and vnsported from all vncleane of synne. Those that haue theyr blynde darkenes yet styll, haue maruaile at this so great a chaungeing of myndes and lyfe in you, and thynke scorne that their riotousnes is condemned by your temperate fa•e, and that their lyfe (whiche floweth ouer with all kyndes of intemperaunce) is bla|med by youre honest vprightnes. They woulde loue the companions of their fylthynes: but nowe they rayle vpon you, because youre lyfe is not suche as theirs is: but yet there is no cause why ye shoulde be moued at their raylyn|lynges, neither are they to be rayled at agayne. Let it be ynough for you, that you haue a good conscience before God. Yf you can by any possible waye conuerte them vnto better, you ought to do your diligēce: howbeit after such sort, that you goe not backe from your own syncere vprightnes. If they do repent, it is to be ioyed at: yf their hertes be hardened, they rayle and scolde euen algaynst them that wyshe them well: referre you the vengeaunce to God, whose iudgement no mortall man is hable to escape. For he in tyme shall iudge all men, not onely the quycke, but also the deade: the quycke, whom Christ at hys commynge shall fynde luyng in the bodye: the deade, whiche before Christes commynge are departed out of this lyfe. Notwithstandyng none lyueth in dede, but he that lyueth vnto godlynes. Those that serue vices, and fylthye lustes, are dead vnto God. And vnto him at his iudgement, those that be dead in dede, shal rendre accōpt, yf they wil not repent from theyr vices. For he (that most equall indyfferent iudge) shall punyshe them for youre sakes, and paye you the full rewardes of your pacient suffraunce. In dede he is desirous that all men reuiue vnto gospellike godlynes, and for that cause sake, he woulde haue the grace of the gospell p•ached, not onely vnto the lewes, that lyued deuoutly after Moses lawe, not onely vnto the Gentiles that lyued honestlye after the lawe of nature, but also vnto the dead and vtterly buried in all kyn|des of naughtines. And vnto theyr darkenes, he woulde haue the lyght of the gospell to be layed: them he woulde haue taughte with all myldenes and pacience,

that they also awaking at length, myght contemne those thynges wherin being nowe blynde they repose their felicitie, and be reputed as dead in bodye with men, in that they are not entangled w^t any affecciōs of the body, but with God they myght lyue in spirite. For none is alyue in dede, in Goddes iudgement, but he that is after this sorte deade. There is nothyng of long continu|aunce in this worlde, and the ende of all thynges shall shoretly come. And their voluptuous pleasures shall sone forsake them, and your paynefull punishel|ment shall sone haue an ende. And also

euerlastyng ioye abydeth for you, and euerlasting cormentes abyde for them.

The texte.

Be ye therefore sobre and watche vnto prayer. But aboue all thynges haue feruente loue among your selues. For loue shal couer the multitude of synnes. Be ye her belrouis one to another without gr•d gyng. As euerye man hath receyued the gyfte euen so minister the same one to another, as good ministers of the manifolde grace of God. If any man speake, let hym talke as the wordes of God. If any man minister, let hym do it as of the habilytie, whych God ministreth vnto hym. That God in al thynges maye bec glorified through Iesus Christ, to whom be prayse and dominion for euer & euer. Amen.

Therefore it stondest you in hande by all meanes, that that daye fynde you not slugishly napping, nor carelesly snourting by riot and slouthfulnes. But rather prepare your selues alwayes ready agaynst that daye, and be sobre and watching in continuall prayers. For it shall come vnloked for (so it is the will of Christ) but if it shall fynd thee in them, it can not chose but come happyly. Sobrietie is an acceptable thyng to God, it is a sure mater to watche, for God doeth gladly heare the prayers that are set forthe by temperaunce and wat|chyng. But this is a thyng a greate deale most acceptable of all, that you em|brace euery one other with continuall and vehement loue, releuing euery one other with mutuall good turnes. So as he that is the more watchefull, maye rayse vp the drowsye snourtour: he that is the better learned, may instructe the lesse learned: he that is y• more diligente, may warne the sluggarde: he that is the more feruente, maye prycke vp the colde one: and he that is the more perfit, maye forgeue him that doeth amysse through infirmitie. For this brynnynge charitie towardes the neighbour, couereth the multitude of sinnes, wherwith we are endangered to God. That whiche we offende agaynste hym, is verye well washen awaye by doynge good turnes vnto our neighbours. Lyke as eluery one hath the fortune of habilitie, so lette hym studye to be good vnto hys brother. Let him that hath substaunce to do withal, shewe himselfe herberous, and bestowe vnto them that haue nede, not grudgingly, nether with murmu|ryng, but gladly and chearefully, estemyng himselfe to receyue a good turne, whan he geueth, and that suche maner of losse of substaunce is a greate gayne with God, whiche shal repaye al with vpheaped mesure. And thinke this more|ouer, that whatsoeuer you spende to the helpynge of youre neyghboure, is the good gyfte of God, geuen to this ende, that as it were hauing that chaunce of •iches commytted to youre credence, you shoulde waxe riche in the vsurye of godly workes. Vnto some God hath distributed some sondry giftes: vnto some, other giftes. Let no man take vpon him to haue that, whiche he hath, of hym selfe: let him thynke it to be Gods gyfte, whiche he would haue distributed by you vpon other, that of doynge good turnes

one for an other, mutuall loue maye be glewed together amonge youre selues more and more, and that there

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might encrease by occasion vnto euery one the rewarde of godlynes. Let no man be discōtent with him selfe, in that he is not endued with this or that gift. Let no man also stonde in his owne conceit, in that he hath mo qualities geuen vnto him than other haue. For so it was the will of the ryche and lyberall gen^till God, to bestowe his gyftes after sondry sortes. No man is Lorde of that whiche he hath receaued: he is nothing but the dispoler: For the thyng that he disposeth, is the lordes. And yf he do that faithfully, chearefully and desirous^lye, lette hym not loke for rewarde of man, inasmuche as he shall receaue it of God. If holsome doctrine chaunce vnto a man, if any man haue the gyfte of a fyne learned tongue, let him not abuse it vnto gayne, vnto pompous statel^lnes and vayne glorye, but vnto the commoditie of his neighbour, and to the glory of Christe. Let the hearers perceyue his wordes to be the wordes of God, and not of men: and that he whiche speaketh is nothyng els, but the instrumēt of the voyce of God. If any man be more hable to haue ministracion of office than of Doctrine, let him administre his gyft, so, as he chalenge not thautori^ltie vnto him selfe, but ascribe it vnto God, that geueth him power and strength to goe aboute the thyng effectually that he taketh in hande. And that shall be done, to the intent that of giftes diuersly distributed, and of offices diuersly gone about, God may be glorified on euery parte, of whom as of the welspring we haue al thynges flowynge vnto vs, not by Moses, but by Iesus Chryste, by whom whatsoeuer the father geueth, he geueth it vnto vs, as his only sonne. Vnto God therefore shall he ascribe the dede, that is holpen by his brothers good turne: vnto God shall he rendre the thanks, whiche is glad that his brother is holpen by his ministerie. So that y[•] totall summe of al glorie redoundeth on euery parte vnto God the father and the sonne, vnto whom is continual glorie & dominion for euer world without ende. Amen. We ought not in this behalfe to seke after glory, but it behoueth vs to remembre our due^ltie, wherwith we may please God. Concerning the rewarde let hym alone with all that we put our truste in. For he shall turne the persecutours malice into your good, be shal change your paynful sorowes into gladnesse, & your repro^lche into glorie.

The texte.

Derely beloued, maruaile not that ye are proued by fire, which thing is to trie you, as though some straunge thing happened vnto you: but reioyce, in asmuche as ye are par^ltakers of Christes passion: that when hys glorye appereth ye maye be mery and glad. If ye be rayled vpon for the name of

Christ, happy are ye. For the glorye and the spirite of God resteth vpon you. On their part he is euil spoken of, but on your parte he is glorified Se that none of you be punyshed as a murtherer, or as a thefe, or an euyl doer▪ or as a busy body in other mens matters. If any man suffre as a Christian man, let hym not be a shamed: but let hym glorifie God on his behalfe. For the tyme is come that iudgement must begin at the house of god. If it first begin at vs what shal the ende be of them which beleue not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be sauēd, where shall the vn|godly and the sinner appere: Wherefore let them that are troubled according to the will of God, commyt their soules to hym with wel doing, as vnto a faythfull creatour.

Therefore, dearly beloued, be not disquieted in y[•] meane season as it were a newe matter, though you which shalbe the felowes to gether of the kyngedom heauen, be tried with afflictions in this worlde, as gold is with fire. That thing ought to seme no newe matter vnto you, whyche wente long ago before in the triedly proued prophetes, and lately in Christe. It ought to be the more easylye

borne, in asmuche as you see it happen cōmonly vnto you with all the tried peo|ple of god. And seyng y[•] in this behalfe you beyng disciples resemble your mailster, and beyng membres resemble your heade Iesus Christe, ought to be glad and reioyce, y[•] lyke as now he doeth vouchesaue to haue you companions of his afflictions, euen so afterwarde, whā he shal open his maiestie vnto al men, & ha|uing made them ashamed & astonied, y[•] afflicted him and you for malice of him, you shal reioyce with vnspeakeable wirthe, which may be felte, but not expressed with wordes. In the meane season, yf men reuyle you, howe sore soeuer you are afflicted in bodye, not for your owne naughtye dedes, but for the profession of Christ, yet in this behalfe you are blessed, that euen in y[•] middes of your tormen|tes, & in the myddes of your dispightfull handlinge, the glorious spirite of god is kyndled againe in you for your harmeles harte & good conscience sake. It is a swete thing to suffer w^t Christ, and it is a glorious thing to suffer for Christ. For as muche as in them lyeth, they reuile euē Christ himselfe, howbeit your in|nocencie, & your pacient suffraunce causeth it to chaunce vnto his glorye. But God forbydde, y[•] any of you should be punished for manslaughter, or theft, ey|ther for naughty wordes speaking, or for curious meddlynge of those thinges that pertaine nothing to you. For it is y[•] cause & not the tormenting y[•] maketh a Marter. And whosoeuer suffreth for none other cause, but y[•] he is called a Chri|stian, he nedeth not to be ashamed of his

punishment. It is a shame to be called a thefe: but it is a glorious thīg to be called a Christiā. Blessed are they, whiche (though it be after that painful sorte) may escape the tormentes of hell fire: and that through afflictions y[•] shall endure but as it were y[•] space of a moment, haue passage geuen them vnto ioyes that shal neuer haue ende. Wherunto God ad|mitteth none, but him that is notably proued and tried by muche suffring of so|rowes. Ones he shal practise dreadful iudgemēt, whā the tyme of mercy is past, wherat euery one shalbe rewarded accordīg to his deseartes. In y[•] meane while, y[•] iudgemēt is more easye, inasmuche as beyng purely tried by tēporal tormētes we are made worthy of y[•] felowship of Christ, whiche wil allow nothing but the thinge that is most pure and most perfiteley scowred from drosse. Nowe is the tyme, that this iudgement be exercised, to thintent it maye more euidently appeare, who doe trulye put their truste in God, and whoe doe trulye loue Christe in dede. Thinges beyng in prosperous and quiet estate are not argumētes of true godlines. As for Moses ceremonies, euen a very hipocrite maye kepe them, but as for losse of goodes, reuilinges, enprisonmentes, stripes, and death, no man taketh paciently, but he y[•] hath an inuincible faith ioyned w^t a gospellyke charitie. And vnto these, let thē readily prepare them selues, that wil in tyme cōming reigne w^t Christ. This iudgemēt shal beginne at y[•] house of god, whiche is the congregacion. Than yf it be nedefull for vs to be so clensed, whiche beleue the gospell, and liue vprightely: what ende, what iudgemēt, what payne abideth them, that haue no constaunt belefe in the gospel, and continue styl in their owne wickednesses? Yf they be so tryed, whiche with single plaines obeye the gospell, and hauynge forsaken all the pleasures of this worlde, haue geuen ouer them selues to the studye of godlynes: what shall become of them whome the preachinge of the gospell hath made worse? And yf they whiche lyue iustly, knowinge themselues giltye in none euyl, atchieue not (without peryll and muche a doe) the porte of eternall saluacion: In what

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hope shall the wicked and mischeuous doers shewe their face in so straight and so dreedefull a iudgement? Therefore they maye in no wyse hope to get any saluacion there, to thintent that they also whiche are tormented in this worlde, not for euyl doynges but for the wyll of God, must not trust to them selues, but to their possible powers exercisinge y[•] workes of godlynes, they shoulde after this sorte put their soules in the handes of God their maker, who of his goodnesse wyll not suffer it to peryshe that he hath made, yf they continue in well doynge to deathe, and yf they wyll haue none affiaunce in their owne merites, but loke for rewarde of his bounteous lyberalitie.

¶ The .v. Chapter.

The texte.

¶ The elders whiche are among you, I exhorte, which am also an elder, and a witnes of the afflicciōs of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shalbe opened. Fede ye Chri|stes flocke, asmuche as lyeth in you, taking the ouersyght of them, not as compelled ther|to, but wyllingly: after a godly sorte, not for y[•] desyre of tylthy lucre: but of a good minde, not as thoughe ye were lordes ouer the parishes: but that ye be an ensample to the flocke and that with good wyll. And when the chefe sheperde shall appeare, ye shall receaue a[•] incorruptible crown of glorye. Lykewyse ye yonger, submyt your selues vnto the elder. Submit your selues euery man one to another, knet youre selues together in lowlynes of mynde. For God resisteth the proude, and geueth grace to the humble.

Endeouour your dilygence vnto this, brethren, bothe euery one seuerally by your selues, and all together in commune, that followynge the fotestepes of Christ, you may atteyne vnto his fellowship. Howbeit it is reason, y[•] those, whiche excede other in au|toritie of age, should excede also in the study of godlynes. Of their example, of their maner of teaching, and of their autoritie dependeth the resydue of the multitude. And it is not inoughe for them, to lyue vpryghtly themselues, excepte they be carefull for the multitude also. For vnto them, their graye head augmenteth autoritie, vse of thinges augmenteth wysel|dome, and long proued & tried vprightenes of lyfe augementeth their credence. You therfore I speake to, you elders, the kepets of the people, beyng an elder also my selfe, whiche haue performed in mater & in dedes, the thing y[•] I teache, that is to say, in suffring enprisonmentes & stripes for the name of Christ sake, beyng ready also euen vnto y[•] crosse, whā the wil of God so shal be, & in like ma|ner hauing this very good hope, y[•] whom he hath vouchesafe to haue suffer for his sake, he wil admitte also the same vnto y[•] felowship of the glorye of heauen, as sone as y[•] day shal come, wherein he shal openly declare his Maiestie vnto the world, & y[•] wrastlinges of y[•] world being at an ende, y[•] rewardes shalbe brought furthe. I beseche you for y[•] tormentes sakes y[•] Christ suffred for you, & for myne afflictions sakes, wherein I folowe my lord to myne vttermost power, shew your selues right feders of y[•] multitude in dede, as it is chaūced to euery mans lotte, watche, walke about, loke on euery syde, & take hede, y[•] nothing wante vnto the flocke, for whome Christ died, nether holy consolacion, nether holsome doctrine, ne example of gospellyke lyfe. You are called *Superintendentes*: accomplyshe in dede y[•] thing y[•] you are called. Fede, cure, gouerne, kepe, y[•] nothing perishe, y[•] no|thīg runne out of y[•] way.

And see y[•] you doe y[•], not grudgingly, as mē cōstrained through feare,
either shame, or necessitie of office: but w^t diligēt readines, gladlly, & w^t a
good wil, respectig nothing elles, but what may be acceptable to god.

It is his busynes that you take in hande, and of him you shall receyue
euerla|stinge rewarde. Loke not for rewarde in this lyfe. It is a shame, to
take charge of christian people for vauntage sake: whiche charge no man
is praysed for talkynge, but he that dooeth it of his owne accorde and
frely without any thinge. That man is fallen out of the rewarde of heauen,
that hunteth after the hyre of his office at mennes handes here in this
worlde. Next vnto this it is, yf any man, thoughe he set naught by lucre,
yet seketh ambiciously after honour and dignitie, being desyrus to be a
commaunder, beyng desirous to be reuerenced: that man shall haue no
rewarde also with God. He hath receaued his rewarde: The office of a
right bysshop is ferre of from lordinge. It is not a tirannye, but an
administracion. A bisshop is put in autoritie for this ende, not to scrape to
him selfe the more gayne therby, not to reigne a lofte, and to vse his
pleasure the more frely, but to doe the more good. Therefore you elders,
remēbre your office, behaue your selues so in all thinges, that your lyfe
maye be an example vnto the people of a gospellyke conuersacion. Let
them learne of your behaiour to set naught by lucre, let them learne to
defye dysdeignous statelynes, let them learne to hope for the hyre of their
duties dooing at Christes handes, & to haue respecte to none other thing
in this worlde, but because so it is honest, so is it ac|ceptable to God. In
the meane season playe the good shepherdes frely without any thing.
Neuertheles in dede it shall not be doen for nothing: but whan the prince
of shepherdes Iesus Christ shall in thappointed daye openly shew forth
him selfe, whiche gaue him selfe wholly for his shepe, the keping wherof
he hath committed vnto your credence, than in stede of a vyle & mortal
triflyng rewarde you shall receyue the glorious crowne of your duetye
doinge, whiche shal neuer fade. Therefore in no wyse take the thing vpon
your selues, that you ought to loke for at your princes handes: preuent
not the daye, whiche he woulde haue to be vncertaine vnto vs. And like as
it is the parte of suche as be Elders, to shew them selues as fathers vnto
the yonger, euen so the yonger ought on the other parte to shewe them
selues manerly and obedient vnto the elders: and lyke as the Elders
submitte them selues throughe gospellyke charitie vnto all men, to
thintent they maye doe the more good, euen so the yong ought not to
abuse the gentilnes and facilitie of the Elders, but it is rather cōuenient
for them to obey them w^t so muche the more ready diligence, as they
abuse the lesse their autoritie. Where true charitie is, there autoritie is
nether dysdeinfull nor the youthe is outragiouslye fearce. He y[•] is set in

dignitie, goeth about nothings but this, that he may doe good for other: and he y[•] is a subiecte, doeth more of his owne free ac|corde, than he requireth him. Let all men therefore haue gentyll sobrenes fixxed vtterly in their hartes: and that shall be occasion, that nether the Elders shalbe weary of their charge, nor y[•] yonger greued at their autoritie. God hateth fearce flowtenes of stomake in men: his delyght is in lowe mynded heartes, and suche is deiecte them selues: he bestoweth his giftes vnto them that take nothing vpon them selues: he repelleth & forsaketh y[•] proude persons, as vnworthy his be|nefites. Suche as humble them selues, them he aduanceth: and suche as exalte them selues, them he throweth downe: suche as truste to their owne strengthes, them he doeth not vouchesafe to helpe: and those that dystruste theyr owne powers and depende wholye at his becke, them he chearyssheth and maynteyneth.

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The texte.

¶ Submit your selues therefore vnder the mightie hande of God, that he may exaite you, when the tyme is come. Last all youre care vpon him: for he euer careth for you. Be sober and watche, for youre aduersatye the deuyll as a roarynge lyon walketh aboute, sekynge whome he maye deuour: whome resyst stedfast in the faithe, knowynge that the same affliccions are appointed vnto your brerbren, that are in y[•] worlde. But the God of all grace whiche hath called vs vnto his eternall glorye by Christ Iesus shall his owne selfe (after that ye haue suffred a lytle afflicciō) make you perfecte: settle, strength and stablyshe you. To him be glorye and domintō for euer and euer. Amen. By Siluanus a faithfull brother vnto you (as I suppose) haue I written breffely, exhortinge and testifying howe that this is the true grace of God, wherin ye stande. The congregacion of them whiche at Babilon are companions of your eleccion, saluteth you, and so dothe Marcus my sonne. Grete ye one another with the kysse of loue. Peace be with you al whiche are in Christ Iesu. Amen.

Submitte your selues therefore, not for dreade of men, but because you trust in the mightie hande of God. There is no peril, leste you shoulde be troden vn|der fote perpetually for euer: for he shall aduance and exalce you a lofte, whan the day of rewardes cōmeth. Loke not waueringly about you, haue no distrust, be not aftayed, lest you be tossed in y^e sources of sorowes, as thoughe you were vndefended and set naught by: for he, that is hable in all thinges, and seeth all thinges, hath charche of you, & wil not suffer any thing of you to peryshe. It is y^e cōmune custoume of youthe to be bēt vnto pleasures, vnto ryot, & vnto wan|tonnesse. But be you sobre, watche you in your myndes, beyng alwayes readily* attētiue and alwayes

circūspecte. For y[•] aduersarie of your saluaciō, y[•] thursteth after mannes destrucciō, sleapeth not, but walketh about lyke an hungrye roalringlion, sekeyng in euery place whom he may snatche vp to deuour: & assaieng by all meanes entraunce vnto you, sometyme layeng wayte for you by volup|tuous pleasures, sometyme openly oppugnyng you by persecucions. Geue not place vnto him, but resiste him with vnshrinkinge stronge hartes. You wil say: where haue we power against him that is so mightie? He that hathe charge of you, is mightier than he. Put all the whole trust of your hartes vpon him, and your aduersaries power shalbe nothinge. Against the faithles, he is strong: but against the faithfull he is feble. Yf he shoulde assaulte this man or that man, parchaunce it might rightly be takē for a sore greuous afflicciō, but now doeth he impugne al the whole flocke of the godly w^t like malicious hatred. He perse|cuteth Christ in you, he enuieth all mens saluacion, so that the cōmune afflicciō of all shalbe the more easely hable to be borne, & to stande w^t agreable myndes agaist the cōmune enemy. These matters shal shortly haue an ende. Nether wil God, from whome procedeth all goodnes, leaue you succourles in the meane season, but wil throughly perfourme the thing that he hathe begonne in you. He hath geuen you suche stomackes, that for his sake you should not be afrayed to suffer tormētes, wherby he hath called you vnto his glory that neuer shal haue ende. He wyll not suffer you to mysse of the victorie: yf you wrestle manfully, he wil helpe you in your wrestlynge, and wyll garnysshe, strengthen and esta|blyshe you, that beyng tormented for a shorte season, you maye atteine the crowne of immortalitie. By his ayde we get the victorye, & of his free gyfte we shal receyue the rewarde. For there is nothing wherin we may chalenge any prayse to our selues: vnto God alone is al glorye due, not onely in this worlde, but also into al ages for euer: Amē. At this present I wil write no further vnto you: For of this selfe same matter, I suppose, I wrote vnto you of late, al|thoughe in fewe wordes, by Siluanus a faithfull brother, & I doubte not but he delyuered the Epistle well and faithfully. In it I desired and hartily belsought you, to perseuer styl in that which you haue begonne: that nothing alter

your mynde. The waye that you haue entred, is the very right true waye vnto saluacion. Thus ferre you haue proceded forewarde by the goodnes of God. Continue styll stedfastly throughe his helpynge ayde, tyll you attayne vnto the victorious rewarde of lyfe that neuer shall dye. The congregacion of the christianes commende them vnto you, euen the congregacion whome God hath chosen out to himselfe together with you in Babilon, whiche in the myddes of wicked ydolatrours folowe the godlynes of the gospels, and in myddes of most sylthye corrupte lyuers embrace the purenes of cleane conuersacion. You are not alone by your

selues, God hath his electe in euery place: In dede those are but a very fewe, howbeit they are a fynely tryed sede to encrease the congregalcion in tyme commynge more latgely. Marke saluteth you, whiche is to me as it were my sonne. Salute you euery one other with a kysse, not after the sorte that is geuē more custumely than hartely, but with an holy, pure, & true christiā mynde, which is not doone against the hearte, but is the signe of a chaste and a pure vpright louer, and not a lyeng countrefaict token. And (to make an ende of myne Epistle in lyke sorte as I beganne it) Grace and peace be alwayes prelsent with you al, which beyng engrafted vnto the bodye of Iesu Christ, lyue by his spirite, that grace maye couple you vnto God, and peace maye glewe you together with mutual concorde: whiche thing God (that is best and most myghtye) brynge to passe.

Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the first Epistle of S. Peter thapostle.